Governor's Water Augmentation Council

Long Term Augmentation Committee

May 3, 2017 Meeting Summary

Time: 10:00am – 12:00pm
Location: Arizona Department of Water Resources

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Chairwoman Maureen George called the meeting to order and welcomed those in attendance. The following members of the Governor's Water Augmentation Council (GWAC) were present: Warren Tenney, Wade Noble, Sarah Porter, Chris Udall, and Virginia O' Connell. Council member Phil Townsend attended via webinar.

Pacific Institute Report and ADWR Planning Area Map

ADWR Planning Area Map

Martin Stiles, Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) Water Resources Specialist, presented a draft version of a Planning Area analysis project. The project uses estimated projections to create two metrics that represent the temporal and fiscal needs for water augmentation projects in the Planning Areas. A draft map created for this project uses water demand data to estimate future demands and attempts to answer some of the research questions put forth by the Finance Committee:

- *What Planning Areas have the most urgent imbalances?*
- *What are the costs to address these projected future imbalances through local augmentation projects?*
- *What is the water demand and projected imbalance for each Planning Area?*
- *Can we prioritize each Planning Area's water augmentation options by cost effectiveness and the Area's ability to pay?*

Although the map is still being worked on, its draft is available to the public on the ADWR website here.

Pacific Institute Report

Zacary Richards, ADWR Water Resources Specialist, reviewed the findings of a report from the Pacific Institute (2016) titled The Cost of Alternative Water Supply and Efficiency Options in California. The report accounts for the full capital and operating costs of a project measured over its useful life, water yield, and production capacity. It also integrates a net cost to the output achieved, as well as co-benefits such as reductions in wastewater and/or energy bills. A chart depicting a levelized cost for water augmentation and efficiency measure from page 3 of the report can be found here.

The Nature Conservancy Projects

The Nature Conservancy has initiated several projects throughout Arizona that include restoring perennial streams and preserving habitats. Scott Deeny, the Arizona Water Program Lead for The Nature

Conservancy, presented on some of the latest projects the non-profit has been involved with. A recent project focuses on the Verde River. The River has seen increased flows as a result of switching from high water use crops, such as alfalfa and corn, to barley which can be planted and harvested earlier in the season it also supports local brewery businesses such as Wilderness Brewing and Sinagua Malt Company.

The Nature Conservancy has also partnered with the Cochise Conservation and Recharge Network to maintain two recharge facilities along the Upper San Pedro River. Currently, almost one billion gallons are being conserved annually on lands under management by Cochise County.

The Nature Conservancy also has plans to collaborate with stakeholders in Mexico to reconnect the Colorado River to the Gulf of California.

Table Review

A table under construction by the Long-Term Water Augmentation Committee that will serve as a template of information to be gathered on a wide range of subjects by a consultant through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process was reviewed by the Committee.

A draft of the table may be found here.

Subjects such as weather modification, water banking, forest restoration, energy impacts, existing projects, and rule changes were added to the table as important evaluation factors and augmentation options to consider. Additionally, the word “effluent” was replaced with “recycled” for marketing purposes.

Request for Proposal Discussion

Chairwoman Maureen George explained that her vision for the Committee, moving forward, is to use the data that will be collected by a consultant identified through the RFP process and tailor it to each of the 22 Planning Areas as a means that would allow ADWR to receive input from local stakeholders in the Planning Areas regarding the support for a feasible water augmentation project. If local support for a water augmentation project exists, a proposal to the GWAC could be finalized.

Determine and Assign Committee Tasks

Bruce Hallin of the Salt River Project was tasked with defining the Committee’s intent between long-term and a short-term water augmentation projects.

Sarah Porter offered to assist in structuring the marketing and publicity regarding a water augmentation strategy. Ms. Porter emphasized the importance of informing the public of the realistic nature of such a strategy and that augmentation projects would prove feasible in some planning areas, while others may not. The Committee was advised not to frame the Committee’s intent in such a manner that would give businesses and the public the exaggerated perception that the state was on a trajectory to lose its water supply. Rather, the intent should convey that the Committee’s efforts were to prevent such a scenario from ever becoming a reality.

Public Comments

Rogene De Jong, a resident of the West Basins Planning Area, expressed her concern of the lowering water tables in her community. She offered some statistics and the growing number of wells established in the Planning Area in the last few years. She also mentioned her frustration with the process to establish any sort of water management in the Butler, McMullen, and Ranegras Basins that constitute the West Basins.

Items for the Next Agenda

At the next meeting, the Committee will review changes to the table including completed tasks from Bruce Hallin and Sarah Porter.

Pam Muse of the Arizona Department of Water Resources will also present her update of the projections of water supply and demand data for all 22 Planning Areas.

Closing Remarks and Next Meeting Date

The date and location for the next Governor's Water Augmentation Council Long Term Augmentation Committee meeting will be determined.